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Item 2 of the provisional agenda*
Creating an environment at the national and international levels conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development

Statement submitted by W. Haywood Burns Environmental Education Center, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/2006/100.

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Statement

The conference included a total of 134 participants: New York Legislative Representatives; Educators; a representative of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat; a Special Advisor on Immigrant Populations; Environmental Protection Agency of the United States of America; New York State Department of Environmental Conservation; State University of New York at Albany; Rutgers University; College of St. Rose; Groundworks USA; local environmental authorities; Times Union, New York State Legislative Gazette; WNYT-13 (NBC); civil society organizations; non-governmental organization coalitions; and victims of Hurricane Katrina. Conference discussions included the environmental effects on disadvantaged urban communities. We primarily addressed three issues: Exploring the social and economical conditions created by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita; Assessing the short-term health and environmental needs of these underserved communities; and developing methods and tools to help rebuild and rehabilitate those areas. After deliberations, participants adopted the Albany Declaration in the spirit of human civilization, human rights, and sustainable development in order to promote a healthy, equitable and environmentally sustainable life for all and achieve the MDGs.

The Albany Declaration

For a Healthy, Equitable and Environmentally Sustainable Life for All

PREAMBLE

We the participants, representing government, local authorities, public agencies, NGO coalitions and civil society at the 4th Annual Global Conference: **"Analyzing Healthy Urban Environments Through Exploring Human and Civil Rights: Katrina; a Case Study"** gathered in Albany, the Capital of the State of New York from February 17-18, 2006;

Whereas recent natural and man-made world disasters have led to the recognition of the stark differences and disparities in health, education, housing, employment, economics, technology and the environment in disadvantaged inhabitants of around the world;

Whereas universal education, water rights, labor, digital divide, living wages, viable energy, and access to health care promote stability and positive citizenry participation in the global community;

Whereas civic engagement in public policies, equity and social justice is essential to eradicate poverty, ensure environmental justice and achieve the internationally agreed development goals (MDGs);

Whereas, participants are highly appreciative of the innovative approach and strategic framework of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to monitor the post-disaster Tsunami outcome;

We the participants request the government, local authorities, NGOs and all stakeholders to sponsor and support:

1. Structuring The Global Urban Health Network to provide a communication bridge.

2. Establishing the International Center for Sustainable Development (Panama) as a new model for integrated knowledge management;

3. Requesting with urgency that the United Nations sponsor regional preparatory committee meetings for Southern Caucus NGOs which will create opportunities for all stakeholders to develop strategies to achieve the Millennium Declaration Goals (MDGs).

4. Request the Department and the United States Environmental Protection Agency to support the formulation and the implementation of a strategic framework to monitor the post-disaster Katrina outcome;

We the participants proclaim the **Albany Declaration** as a consensus statement of recommendations and request our host, the NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC, **W. Haywood Burns Environmental Education Center**, to submit it to the High-level segment and the Coordination segment at the substantive session of 2006 for integration into the ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration of July 2006;